

GREAT SOUTHERN TOURING ROUTE

VICTORIA • AUSTRALIA



Great Southern Touring Route



GEELONG • GREAT OCEAN ROAD • GRAMPIANS • BALLARAT

GREATSOUTHERNTOURING.COM.AU

GEELONG & THE BELLARINE

An energetic, sophisticated city with a laid-back, foodie fantasy in its backyard.

Geelong is a regional hub preened for the 21st century with a 'can't miss' list longer than your imagination. Just beyond, the beautiful Bellarine beckons with beaches, villages and legendary restaurants.

A leisurely hour's drive from Melbourne, Geelong boasts a brilliant bay and a vibrant waterfront precinct that's perfect for strolling and letting the kids run free. Explore the Baywalk Bollard Trail and its whimsical characters that breathe life into the city's heritage. Then choose from an array of restaurants, cafés, bars and eateries overlooking the stunning waterfront.

Wander shore-side past parkland and the yacht marina to a vintage carousel and boardwalks, all against a backdrop of boat cruises, chopper rides and seaplane joyrides. In the distance the granite peaks of the You Yangs entice with picnic grounds, mountain bike trails, walking tracks and abundant wildlife.

A couple of blocks uptown in the Arts and Culture precinct, the Geelong Gallery and Geelong Performing Arts Centre (GPAC) are at the heart of a vibrant regional arts community. Free admission at the gallery lets the whole family delve into the diverse collection before taking in a live performance at GPAC.

The region's fascinating indigenous culture, stretching back thousands of years, is on show at Narana Creations Aboriginal cultural centre.

If wine is your tippie or your passion, you'll love sampling the delights of the Geelong Wine Region. Wineries, many with cellar doors, are dotted around the three sub-regions and offer award-winning vintages, boutique intimacy and sumptuous regional food.

The Bellarine is Geelong's not-so-secret hidden treasure – a semi-rural community that punches well above its size for fabulous gourmet food, fine restaurants and laid-back eateries. You'll find celebrity chefs, foragers, artisan growers and slow food buffs. Drool over award-winning craft beer lists and organic wineries. Don't miss a thing – follow the Bellarine Taste Trail and choose from around 60 operators throwing out their welcome shingle.

Poke around the Bellarine's villages – Portarlington, Ocean Grove, Queenscliff, Drysdale, Point Lonsdale and Barwon Heads – and you'll unearth unforgettable experiences. Quiet beaches, harbour-side cafés, antique shops, book stores.

Queenscliff is renowned for its November music festival, heritage streetscapes and ferry terminal. Why not get aboard and cruise across the bay to Sorrento? Tour operators offer a range of eco-adventures, fishing charters, dive trips and cruise tours out of the modern Queenscliff Harbour, where you can also climb a tower for a 360 degree view or savour fresh-off-the-boat seafood.

Five of Australia's top 50 rated public access golf courses are located in this region – a great reason to pack your clubs and plan for a golfing getaway.

Geelong & The Bellarine brims with everybody's favourite things: sandy beaches, inspiring walking trails, art spaces, unique shopping, tours, adventures and food that's to sigh for. It's where the best of city, country and coast merge.



GREAT OCEAN ROAD

Where a life-changing road journey is just a drop in the ocean of thrills and adventures on offer.

Showcasing some of the world's most dramatic scenery, the Great Ocean Road region is much more than a road trip – it's a coast-hugging experience you'll never forget. And never want to leave.

Kick off your adventure at Torquay on the Surf Coast, the cradle of Aussie surf culture. Explore the Surf World Museum or watch world-class waves roll in at iconic Bells Beach where international surfers ride out the annual Rip Curl Pro. Treat the kids to a surf lesson or shop your heart out in the birthplace of iconic surf brands.

The Great Otway National Park straddles the coast and hinterland from Torquay to Princetown. Think: cool temperate rainforest, ancient tall timber, cascading waterfalls and abundant wildlife. With 103,000 hectares of nature to cycle, walk or drive, you're assured an awesome enviro experience and a trail less travelled.

Pause a while at the Memorial Arch at Eastern View to reflect on our fallen soldiers of World War I and the returned servicemen who built the Great Ocean Road between 1918 and 1932.

The all-season resort town of Lorne is your go-to place for lunch. It's where cosmopolitan meets coastal retreat – a funky shopping and café strip clustered in a picture-perfect setting of sublime beach and glorious rainforest. Perfect for beach strolling, alfresco dining, whale spotting and people watching.

Apollo Bay is laid-back and lovely - a great stop-over within easy reach of the region's top attractions. Discover the Cape Otway Lightstation perched high on the seacliffs at the coastline's most southerly point. Head inland and elevate your spirits with a treetop walk or zip line through the rainforest near the timber town of Beech Forest. If walking is more your pace, tackle a little or a lot of the 104km Great Ocean Walk embracing the coast from Apollo Bay.

From Princetown, the Port Campbell National Park wraps up one of Australia's most famous stretches of coast including London Bridge, Loch Ard Gorge and the legendary Twelve Apostles. Take in the beauty of these nature-sculpted rock forms from a chopper, a cliff-top viewing deck or clamber down Gibson Steps for a brilliant beach vantage point.

The seaside village of Port Campbell, nestling on a horseshoe-shaped bay, is famous for fresh seafood, ocean views and a relaxed pace of shopping and dining.

The regional centre of Warrnambool is steeped in seafaring heritage. Put your anchor down for a day or two and explore the Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village, an interactive 1870s streetscape and museum. Don't miss 'Shipwrecked' – a stunning sound and laser show.

Just west of Warrnambool, the Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve boasts prehistoric volcanic landforms and native creatures aplenty.

The delightful fishing village of Port Fairy rounds out the western reaches of this region of incredible contrasts. From rugged coast to rural hinterland, it's an eye-popper and show-stopper at every turn.



GRAMPIANS NATIONAL PARK & SURROUNDS

Soul-stirring, spiritual and adventurous – the Grampians will rock your world.

There are more than 400 million years of history in the Grampians, the verdant mountains rising from the vast landscapes of the Western District plains. They are the setting for the largest collection of Aboriginal rock art in Australia.

The Aboriginal history of the region dates back more than 10,000 years. Brambuk, the National Park and Cultural Centre in the Grampians National Park, is a 'must do' for visitors keen to learn about local Aboriginal culture and pick up the best information and interpretation of the national park.

The Grampians offer many adventure activities including rock-climbing, walking, or just enjoying the view from the many lookouts perched on craggy mountain tops.

There are a number of waterfalls, the best known MacKenzie Falls, one of four in the MacKenzie River Gorge. Spring, when it is framed by wildflowers, is the best time to visit Beehive Falls, an easy walk from Roses Gap.

Other natural features in the region include the Kanawinka Geopark. Highlights include Mt Rouse, Mt Eccles and Nigretta Falls.

Visitors have little trouble finding great food and wine to go with the brilliant scenery of the Grampians. Vines were first planted in the region in the 19th Century. Today they produce sparkling wines, crisp whites and classic reds. A 'must do' is a wander through the kilometres of underground cellars at Seppelts - Great Western. Wines can be purchased at the cellar door.

The Grampians National Park has many excellent walks, some easy, some demanding like climbs to the top of Mt Sturgeon, the Pinnacle, Mt Abrupt and Mt William – the highest peak in the National Park.

Many of the walks are designed to take in the views and also the Aboriginal rock art sites found in the area. There are a number of strategically placed lookout platforms on the Mt Victory Road, the main road leading to the most accessible viewing areas of the National Park.

A walk at twilight, or even at night offers the chance to see some of the nocturnal native animals including owls, possums and koalas.

More than 200 bird species live in the Grampians and kangaroos abound throughout.

There are a number of towns and villages within the Grampians region offering travellers excellent accommodation and fine dining opportunities including Dunkeld, Hamilton, Ararat, Stawell and Halls Gap which is located in the heart of the National Park.



BALLARAT GOLDFIELDS

A gold-tinged region that glistens with history and blissful indulgence.



Ballarat is the gateway to the Goldfields region. The city's classic colonial architecture stretched out along broad, tree-lined streets reflects the riches taken from the ground after gold was discovered in the 19th Century.

The city is also regarded as the birthplace of Australian democracy. Ballarat was the setting for one of just two civil uprisings in Australia's modern history, the Eureka Rebellion. This battle between troopers and miners has left a stirring legacy in Ballarat.

Among a major collection of Australian art, the Art Gallery of Ballarat also houses the original Eureka flag under which the miners fought and 22 of them died. Four troopers were also killed in the brief battle.

Blood on the Southern Cross, a dramatic and fiery sound and light show, retells the story of the bloody uprising each night at Sovereign Hill, one of the finest tourist attractions in Australia.

Constantly upgraded as a finely detailed recreation of a gold mining town, Sovereign Hill provides an interactive experience for visitors, allowing them to pan for gold or ride on a stagecoach. There's also a working bakery, blacksmith, lolly shop and theatre with live shows.

Ballarat has many other attractions. These include botanic gardens featuring fabulous displays of begonias, Lake Wendouree, wildlife parks and a 23-kilometre long Avenue of Honour.

The regions around Ballarat contain many fascinating villages and towns, some with their own stories of the gold rush to tell, others famous as Spa Retreats.

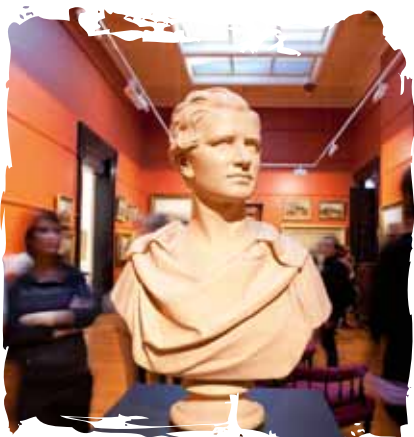
Daylesford and Hepburn Springs combine under the title of Australia's Spa Capital - places to really stay in the lap of luxury.

The mineral waters rising up from beneath the ground have been attracting visitors for more than 150 years.

Visitors can bottle their own mineral water at a number of places in the region. Accommodation, restaurants and spa centres in both towns are of the highest standard.

Wine is regarded as the new gold in the Ballarat region. Some of Australia's best wineries can be found within a short drive of the city. Most wineries have cellar door sales, some also have restaurants.

Fresh produce which can be purchased at the farm gate is another reason to strike out into the countryside around Ballarat.



TOURING

4 days/3 nights...

Melbourne – Great Ocean Road – Grampians

Day 1

Melbourne to Great Ocean Road

- > Depart: Melbourne
- > Overnight: Apollo Bay
- > Distance: 179 kilometres

> Route summary: From Melbourne follow the Princes Freeway through Werribee to Geelong, gateway to the Great Ocean Road.

Visit Geelong's beautiful waterfront before heading to Torquay and the iconic Bells Beach. Drive the exquisitely scenic stretch of the road from Lorne to Apollo Bay. Have dinner at Chris's Restaurant with its dramatic views of the Southern Ocean.

- > Highlights: Werribee Open Range Zoo, Geelong Waterfront, Narana Creations, Surf World Torquay, Bells Beach and Marriners Falls (Apollo Bay).

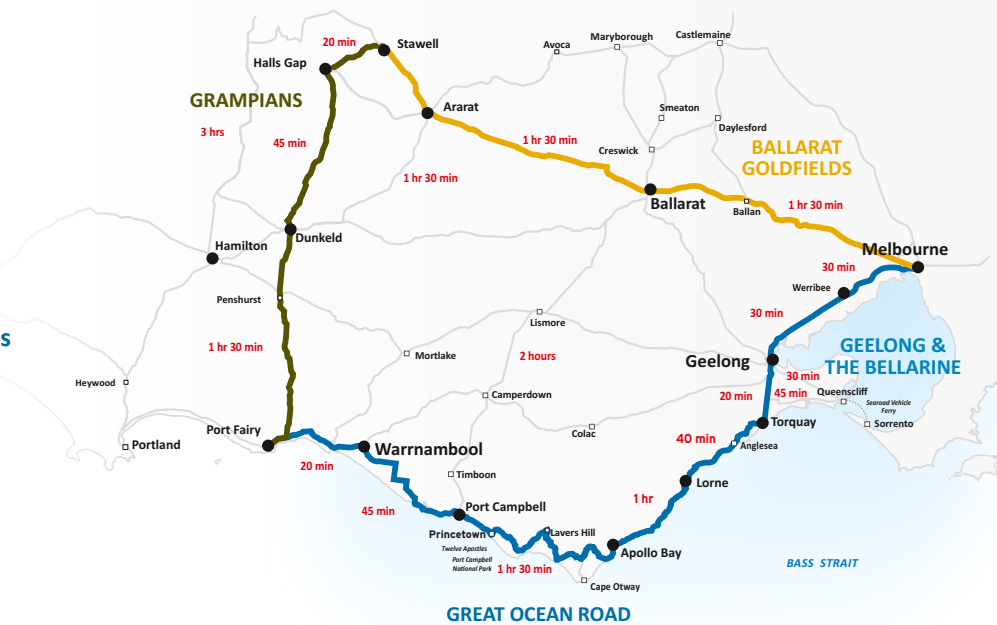
Day 2

Great Ocean Road

- > Depart: Apollo Bay
- > Overnight: Port Campbell/Warrnambool/Port Fairy
- > Distance: Approx 193 kilometres

> Route summary: From Apollo Bay, follow the Great Ocean Road through the Great Otway National Park to the Twelve Apostles and the Port Campbell National Park. A helicopter ride at the Twelve Apostles is the best way to see not only all the Apostles at once but also the rest of this rugged coastline. Travel on to Warrnambool, home of Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village and the Shipwrecked sound and laser show, or on to picturesque Port Fairy via Tower Hill and its amazing native wildlife.

- > Highlights: Great Ocean Walk, Cape Otway Lightstation, Otway Fly Treetop Adventures, Twelve Apostles, Loch Ard Gorge, Bay of Islands, Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village, Logans Beach, Tower Hill, Moyne River.



Day 3

Great Ocean Road to Grampians

- > Depart: Port Campbell/Warrnambool/Port Fairy
- > Overnight: Halls Gap/Dunkeld
- > Distance: Approx 158 kilometres

> Route summary: Whilst in Dunkeld take the time to enjoy a meal at the Royal Mail Hotel before heading onto the majesty and magic of the Grampians National Park. Take in the Aboriginal history of the region at Brambuk – The National Park and Cultural Centre in Halls Gap. Stay the night in either Halls Gap or at Dunkeld.

- > Highlights: Climb Mt Sturgeon or Mt Abrupt, Royal Mail Hotel, Hamilton Art Gallery, Brambuk – The National Park and Cultural Centre, MacKenzie Falls, Aboriginal rock art, walking and wildlife.

Day 4

Grampians to Melbourne

- > Depart: Halls Gap/Dunkeld
- > Overnight: Melbourne
- > Distance: Approx 250 kilometres

> Route summary: Visit Ararat, the only town in Australia founded by Chinese settlers. Drive through some of Australia's finest winemaking country, detouring underground to see the vintages at Great Western. Learn the amazing history from Ballarat's gold rush days and spend some time panning for gold at Sovereign Hill, before heading back to Melbourne.

- > Highlights: Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre, Sovereign Hill and Blood on the Southern Cross.

Optional 5 days/4 nights

Days 1, 2, 3 remain unchanged

Day 4

Grampians to Ballarat

- > Depart: Halls Gap/Dunkeld
- > Overnight: Ballarat
- > Distance: Approx 135 kilometres

> Route summary: Visit Ararat, the only town in Australia founded by Chinese settlers. Drive through some of Australia's finest winemaking country, detouring underground to see the vintages at Great Western. Learn the amazing history from Ballarat's gold rush days and spend some time panning for gold at Sovereign Hill.

- > Highlights: Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre, Sovereign Hill and Blood on the Southern Cross.

Day 5

Ballarat to Melbourne via Daylesford

- > Depart: Ballarat
- > Overnight: Melbourne
- > Distance: 157 kilometres

> Route summary: Spend the morning amid the grand colonial buildings of historic Ballarat, enjoy a coffee and an iPod Tour of the renowned collection at the Art Gallery of Ballarat before heading to Daylesford and Hepburn Springs for an afternoon of indulgence at Hepburn Bathhouse & Spa before returning to Melbourne.

- > Highlights: Art Gallery of Ballarat, Hepburn Bathhouse & Spa.

For more detailed information visit: greatsoutherntouring.com.au



To Adelaide



To Adelaide



To Adelaide

GRAMPIANS

Grampians National Park

20 min

Halls Gap

Stawell

Ararat

45 min

1 hour 30 min

1 hour 30 min

Dunkeld

2 hours 30 min

1 hour 30 min

Penshurst

Hamilton

Skipton

Lismore

Mortlake

Terang

Camperdown

Colac

Tower Hill

WARRNAMBOOL

Port Fairy

20 min

Port Campbell

45 min

1 hour 30 min

Twelve Apostles

Lavers Hill

Wongarra

Beech Forest

Johanna

Apollo Bay

Cape Otway



The best of Australia's natural attractions, coastal scenery, surfing, adventure, Australian native animals, walking and Australian history - all in a flexible, compact, touring package.

This exhilarating drive through some of the most exciting, enchanting and exquisitely different landscapes in Australia is found in the south-west of Victoria, the nation's smallest mainland state.

Marvellous Melbourne, the cosmopolitan capital with its dramatic towers, art galleries, restaurants and charming river, is a natural starting and finishing point.

The romance of the Great Ocean Road, with its rugged coastline, lush forests and overpowering sense of freedom, is an unforgettable experience.

The road also links the major regional cities of Geelong and Warrnambool, both vibrant destinations in their own right.

The soaring mountains of the Grampians National Park, centred around Halls Gap, have been the spiritual heartland of the Aboriginal people for tens of thousands of years. Their ancient rock art is all part of the enriching experience of a visit to the Grampians.

Ballarat and its Goldfields are a heady mix of the romance and majesty of the 1850s gold rush and a whole range of modern treasures.

Pleasure-seekers also come for the refreshing waters or blissful massages on offer in Spa Country, centred on the towns of Daylesford and Hepburn Springs.

Native Australian wildlife abounds across the region, including kangaroos, koalas, platypus, native birds and wildflowers.



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